



**THE counseling center, INC.**  
*we believe in miracles*

**Scioto County**

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The Counseling Center is  
 a contract provider of the  
 ADAMHS Board serving  
 Adams, Lawrence and  
 Scioto Counties.

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**OUTPATIENT TREATMENT**  
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 Children and Adolescents)

**PREVENTION/DIVERSION**  
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**RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT**  
 AOD (Adults)

**RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT**  
 Integrated: AOD/MH (Adults,  
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**CASE MANAGEMENT/  
 SERVICES COORDINATION**  
 Integrated: AOD/MH (Adults,  
 Children and Adolescents)

April 21, 2016

Representative Robert Sprague  
 77 S. High St  
 13th Floor  
 Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Representative Sprague:

I am honored to offer this letter of support for HB248. As you know, I have been working on the frontline of Ohio's opiate epidemic for many years. My community was the first to be ravaged by the influx of Oxycontin and the corresponding prescription drug pill mill industry.

Heroin has now reached epidemic proportion as well, but the vast majority of new heroin users are first addicted to prescription opiates. This was true in 1997 when I first began seeing opiate addicted patients in my treatment program, and it still holds true today. In other words, the path to heroin addiction still goes through prescription opiates which can only reach our citizens, or our streets, through a doctor's prescription.

I see HB248 as a significant step in reducing opiate addiction by reducing the addiction risk potential for this class of drugs. For every person who avoids becoming addicted to opiates there is an enormous personal and community benefit. The devastation caused by each addicted person can be prevented at the source, prescription opiate abuse.

I am also encouraged by the potential of this legislation in terms of increasing safety and protecting our children. Many accidental drug overdoses among youth come from experimentation with prescription opiates, especially those

drugs that can be altered through crushing. Reducing this risk through abuse deterrent medications will save lives.

Thank you for your willingness to propose this legislation. Our communities will experience an immediate benefit from this important safety measure.

Sincerely,



ED HUGHES, MPS, LICDC-CS  
CEO